legislation aimed at the implementation of the biodiversity convention; and

(d) the reaction of the Government to the genetic patenting ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH). (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During an international symposium titled "Bimal K. Bachhawat Symposium on Genome Research Emerging Ethical, Legal, Social & Economic Issues" organised by the National Academy of Sciences, Allahabad from 22nd-25th May, 1997 at Goa, leading biomedical and social scientists, lawyers, journalists from India and some experts from abroad participated. The objectives, origin, current achievements and societal implications of the genome research were discussed. The concern was on the impact of genome research on clinical subjects as well as on population with special reference to the respective countries; and how to draw guidelines for deriving benefits or stopping misuse of research findings.

The recommendations of the symposium would be brough to the notice of the concerned authorities. It was also the aim to create public awareness on the subject.

(c) and (d) The Ministry of Environment and Forests had organised national level consultations of representatives of State Governments, experts and others in New Delhi on 10th June, 1997 to discuss inter alia, the issues relevant to developing a legislation on biodiversity. The consultations acknowledged the complexities in developing a legislation on the subject and suggested that a broad and simple legislation on biodiversity should be formulated with possibilities of delegated legislation. This legislation should be an umbrella legislation with flexibility and transparency. This would cover aspects of gene patenting, definitions and other IPR related issues.

Development of Panchayats

376. SHRI GIRIDHAR GAMANG : Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have prepared special schemes for all round development of Panchayats in Scheduled Areas as envisaged under Article 243 and the Central Act relating to Fifth Scheduled Areas;

(b) if so, the total number of Panchayats at all level, State-wise particularly in Fifth scheduled Areas; and

(c) the details of special schemes prepared by the States having Scheduled Areas for development of Scheduled Tribes there ?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI KINJARAPPU YERRANNIDU) : (a) to (c) No, Sir. The concerned State Governments are required to legislate and take action for all round development of Panchayats in the Fifth Schedule Areas in consoance with the 'Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996. Details of schemes prepared by the States having Scheduled Areas for development of Scheduled Tribes these are not centrally maintained.

[Translation]

Ozone Layers

377. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA : Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state :

(a) whether the studies conducted by the Indian Team in the Antarctica region since 1981 indicate any change in the Oznoe layer;

(b) whether some holes have developped into the Ozones layer over the world causing the danger of ultraviolet radiation; and

(c) the details of the studies conducted in the Antarctica region and the amount spent by India thereon so far ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The ozone observations indicate a decrease in ozone in the stratosphere between 12 to 21 km every year during September-October over Antarctica Region. Since ozone layer absorbs ultraviolet radiation, the ozone-hole has led to increased amount of solar ultraviolet radition reaching earth.

(c) India Meteorological Department (IMD) is participating in Indian Scientific Expedition to Antarctica since 1981. Vertical Profile of atmospheric ozone over Antarctica has been made using Indian ozonesondes. Analysis of these observations has confirmed the existence of ozone-hole. The total expenditure incurred by India Meteorological Department is around Rs. 50.0 lakhs for its scientific